Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application, as amended herein, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 - 21 are presently pending in the application. Claims 1 and 14 have been amended.

On page 2 of the above-identified Office Action, claims 1, 6, 7 - 11, 14 and 17 - 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over U. S. Patent No. 6,697,168 to Von Wechgeln ("**VON WECHGELN**") in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,717,601 to Sanger ("**SANGER**"). On page 4 of the Office Action, claims 2 - 5, 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over **VON WECHGELN** in view of **SANGER**, and further in view of U. S. Patent No. 7,031,545 to Sumimoto et al ("**SUMIMOTO**"). On page 7 of the Office Action, claims 12, 13 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over **VON WECHGELN** in view of **SANGER** and **SUMIMOTO**, and further in view of U. S. Patent No. 7,079,289 to Loce ("**LOCE**").

Applicants respectfully traverse the above rejections.

More particularly, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 14 to recite, among other limitations:

quantizing the binary image data with n bits, wherein n > 1;

The amendments are supported by the specification of the instant application, for example, on page 17 of the instant application, lines 7 - 11, which state:

> FIG. 5 shows, in summary in a flowchart, the sequence of the operations when applying the method according to the invention to binary image data 10. **In a first step S1, the binary image data 10 is quantized with n bits, for example, with 16 bits per image point.** [emphasis added by Applicants]

See also, for example, page 10 of the instant application, lines 14 - 17. See further, step S1 of Fig. 5 ("Quantization with n **Bits**"), in contrast to step S5 of Fig. 5 ("Quantization with 1 **Bit**").

As such, Applicants' amended claims require, among other limitations, quantizing the binary image data with n bits, wherein n>1.

Page 2 of the Office Action points to the **VON WECHGELN** reference as allegedly disclosing the step of quantizing the binary image data with "n bits". Applicants respectfully disagree. In contrast to Applicants' currently claimed invention, the **VON WECHGELN** reference discloses a conventional screening method having image data quantization of only a single bit. This failure of the **VON WECHGELN** reference is

acknowledged on page 2 of the Office Action, which states with regard to **VON WECHGELN**, in part:

> quantizing the binary image data with n bits (see column 3 lines 54-58, a binary image is stored as a bitmap, with some pixels intended to be blackened and some not, therefore suggesting quantizing into two values such as tonal value of white and tonal value of black, **wherein n=1**); [emphasis added by Applicants]

As such, as acknowledged in the Office Action, the **VON WECHGELN** reference discloses image data quantization having only a single bit (i.e., n=1). In contrast thereto, Applicants' amended claims require quantization of the image data using **n** bits, wherein **n>1**. Thus, the **VON WECHGELN** reference fails to teach or suggest, among other limitations, quantizing the binary image data using multiple bits, as required by Applicants' amended claims.

The **SANGER** reference, cited in the Office Action in combination with the **VON WECHGELN** reference against Applicants' claims 1 and 14, does not cure the above-discussed deficiencies of the **VON WECHGELN** reference. Thus, Applicants' claims are believed to be patentable over **VON WECHGELN** and **SANGER**.

Additionally, Applicants have amended claim 14 to further recite, among other limitations:

> quantizing the binary image data with n bits, wherein n > 1, **such that, in a three dimensional representation, the quantized binary image data forms a plateau having vertical flanks;**
>
> filtering the quantized image data with a low-pass filter having a filter window smaller than a screen cell, **such that, in the three dimensional representation, <u>the slopes of the vertical flanks are reduced by the filtering</u>;** [emphasis added by Applicants]

As such, Applicants' amended claim 14 requires, among other limitations, that the binary image data is quantized with n>1 bits, such that, in a three dimensional representation, the quantized binary image data forms a plateau having vertical flanks, wherein filtering of the quantized binary image data reduces the slopes of the vertical flanks. The amendments to claim 14 are supported by the specification of the instant application, for example, on page 11 of the instant application, lines 5 – 8, which state:

> In the three-dimensional representation, the screen dot 1 forms a plateau that projects with vertical flanks out of the plane of the screen cell 2.

And, for example, page 7 of the instant application, lines 4 – 6, which state:

> The invention carries out slight low-pass filtering of the binary image data, **with which the slope of the flanks of the screen dots is reduced.** [emphasis added by Applicants]

None of the prior art references cited in the Office Action teach or suggest, among other limitations of Applicants' claims, a quantizing step with n being greater than one and having the effect that a plateau having flanks is formed in a three dimensional representation, wherein filtering reduces the slope of the flanks, as required by Applicants' amended claim 14.

For the foregoing reasons, among others, Applicants' claims are believed to be patentable over the **VON WECHGELN** and **SANGER** references. The **SUMIMOTO** and **LOCE** references, cited in combination with **VON WECHGELN** and **SANGER** against certain of Applicants' dependent claims, do not cure the above-discussed deficiencies of **VON WECHGELN** and **SANGER**. For the foregoing reasons, among others, Applicants' claims are believed to be patentable over the **VON WECHGELN, SANGER, SUMIMOTO** and **LOCE** references, whether taken alone or in combination.

It is accordingly believed that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, teach or suggest the features of claims 1 and 14. Claims 1 and 14 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art. The dependent claims are believed to be patentable as well because they all are ultimately dependent on claims 1 or 14.

Applic. No. 10/811,475
Response Dated November 3, 2008
Responsive to Office Action of May 2, 2008

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of
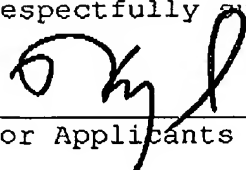
claims 1 - 21 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims

to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate receiving a

telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can

be worked out.

Additionally, please consider the present as a petition for a

three (3) month extension of time, and please provide a three

(3) month extension of time, to and including, November 3,

2008, to respond to the present Office Action.

The extension fee for response within a period of three (3)

months pursuant to Section 1.136(a) in the amount of $1,110.00

in accordance with Section 1.17 is enclosed herewith.

Please provide any additional extensions of time that may be

necessary and charge any other fees that might be due with

respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of

Lerner Greenberg Stemer LLP, No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

_____
For Applicants

Kerry P. Sisselman
Reg. No. 37,237

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November 3, 2008

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